***Press* Release**

The Meteorological Office

PRESS OFFICE

2 September 1999 nr 370

Elf Exploration UK PLC appoints Met. Office to help weather the storm.

Oil and gas company Elf Exploration UK PLC has chosen The UK Met. Office to supply weather services to all of its UK offshore operations over the next three years.

The contract will provide for daily weather forecasts to Elf Exploration's North Sea offshore locations in the Claymore and Piper fields (80 miles Northeast of Aberdeen) and the Elgin/Franklin fields (120 miles East of Aberdeen). Met. Office data will also support Elf Exploration's continuing exploration activities across North West Europe.

Forecasts will be supplied from The Met. Office's Aberdeen Weather Centre, which is being upgraded over the next 12 months to create the leading centre for marine forecasting in the UK.

Clive Martin, Marine Supervisor for Elf Exploration, commented: "Quality weather data is vital to maintaining the highest levels of safety and maximising productive activity. The Met. Office clearly demonstrated that it could reconcile the need to provide an excellent service with the competitive demands of the industry."

Gareth John, Head of Sales and Marketing at The Met. Office, added: "We have made a number of recent developments towards supplying forecasts in a format which is easy to use and which helps our customers meet their commercial, environmental and safety obligations. These developments, alongside our increasing resources at Aberdeen, will enable us to maintain the highest standards of quality and service for our offshore customers and at the same time meet the requirements of the industry to remain cost-effective."

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